

CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

"HOW BEAUTIFUL UPON THE MOUNTAINS, ARE THE FEET OF HIM THAT BRINGETH GOOD TIDINGS, THAT PUBLISHETH PEACE."—Isa. lii, 7.

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CHRISTMAS SERMON.

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By R. O. WILLIAMS.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. Luke ii, 11.

It is well known that Christmas day receives its distinctive appellation from the circumstance of its being the anniversary of our Savior's birth. Among all Christianized people it has been the endeavor of the aged to instill this truth into the minds of the young, and hand it down from generation to generation. Nor is it hardly possible to avoid it. The very festivities, merriment and solemnities with which the day is observed, are calculated to make a deep impression upon the youthful mind. These circumstances make it a day of peculiar interest. It is replete indeed with the gayest, holiest, happiest and even sublimest associations. Its annual return brings in the most delightful recollections. It throws back the mind over the happy scenes of our childhood, when, in all the sportiveness of youth, we met with our little companions, and wished them a "merry Christmas"—and when, amidst these youthful circles every eye was bright, and every countenance was gay, and every heart was gladness. These are associations that are connected with the day—that mingle indeed in our devotional exercises on the present occasion. But there are others of a holier and sublimer character. The very name we give to the day suggests the birth of a Savior, and the splendid and benevolent objects for which he came into the world. On these suggestions it may be useful to meditate. I have therefore selected the portion of divine testimony just read in your hearing as appropriate to the subject and occasion.

It is now something more than eighteen hundred years since the advent of that illustrious personage who was destined to be the deliverer of mankind. It will not be improper for us to take a cursory view of the circumstances connected with this momentous event.

It appears that Joseph, according to the decree of Augustus Cæsar, went up with his espoused to Bethlehem to be taxed. And there in a very humble condition the Son of man was born. He was not doomed however to sink down into oblivion and carry with him the humiliating circumstances of his birth. The knowledge thereof was to spread throughout the world as if upon "the wings of mighty winds." Hence an angel was sent to announce the fact. When the heavenly herald appeared the glory of the Lord shone round certain shepherds who were watching their flocks by night; and they were sore afraid. But the angel proceeded to calm their fears by the announcement of his message. "Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. * * * And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men." Such were the happy auspices of that eventful day. It was a blessed announcement that could draw from the heavenly host the spontaneous burst of glory to

God in the highest. And it is a delightful message that, in the ear of conflicting and rebellious man, announces peace on earth and good will toward men. Good will toward men! This is a happy reflection to mingle in all the best and holiest anticipations of the soul.

For unto you is born this day a Savior. Let us now inquire what is a Savior? Have you ever weighed, examined and answered this question to your own satisfaction? Is that person a Savior who never saves? Is he a savior who comes for the avowed purpose of effecting salvation, yet never accomplishes his object? Could Washington have received the appellation of his country's savior, if his country had not through his exertions obtained her independence? Suppose I hear the cries of a man in distress—a man who has fallen into the river and is in the agonies of death. Immediately, in the fulness of my own self-sufficiency, I declare that I will go and save him. I run in haste to the waters edge, and then my zeal abates and I look on calmly and see him drown. Am I that man's savior? You all respond with a prompt unqualified No. If I had invited him to come to me it would have made no difference. If however, by my own exertions, I had taken him from the river and preserved his life I might justly have been called his savior.

Suppose again that when I had reached the waters edge I call to the man, invite him to come to me and offer to save him, provided he will comply with my request. He struggles awhile and with much exertion, as if by miracle, succeeds at length in reaching the shore. After he has gained a firm footing thereon I step up to him, congratulate him upon his providential escape, give him my hand and offer to assist him. Am I his savior? He certainly would spurn to recognize me as such. After he had saved himself he would need no savior.

A savior then is a person who actually saves; or one who comes in accordance with a previous promise commissioned to save, which object he will, without fail, in due time, accomplish. In this case the person becomes a savior in anticipation. He receives beforehand the appellation of Savior because of the promise and commission which look forward to actual fulfilment. In this sense is Jesus Christ a Savior. He came according to the immutable promise of God "to seek and to save that which was lost;" and this purpose he must eventually fulfil, else he is not entitled to the appellation.

Now comes the interesting inquiry whose Savior is he? Is he yours? Is he mine? Is he every man's savior? That he is the savior of the elect according to the opinion of some, and the savior of believers according to others, admits of no reasonable doubt. But is he not also the savior of sinners and unbelievers? Such is the opinion of Paul; and the Evangelist John assures us that he "is the Christ the Savior of the world." By a figure of speech, in which the *container* is put for the *contained*, "the world" is used to signify the inhabitants of the world. Is then the testimony of the evangelist true? That Jesus is the savior of every individual is evident from the very fact that he "tasted death for every man." For why taste death for him whose savior he is not, and whom he never intended to save? It is evident also from

the angelic annunciation. Connected with the declaration of a Savior's birth this celestial herald brought "good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people." Them essenger then made known a joyful reality—a reality which shall be a source of joy to all people. And what was this but that salvation to be accomplished by the Son of man? If then all people receive great joy, all of course will taste salvation, and Jesus therefore is the savior of all.

But, as has already been seen, he is not the savior of such as he never will save. He is not therefore the savior of all men unless he shall eventually save them. He may offer salvation to all men, yet, if some reject his offers and thereby lose forever the blessings of his salvation, he is not their savior. The mere offer of salvation which is never accepted, does not entitle a person to the appellation of savior, because there is nothing accomplished. If there is a savior there must of necessity be salvation. The act of salvation either performed or in prospect is that alone which can constitute any person a savior. The person who performs, or will perform, this act stands in the relation of a savior to the person who receives or will receive salvation. If, when I see the drowning man, I offer to save him provided he will come to me—he is unable or refuses to come and is therefore drowned—there is no salvation, and consequently I cannot become a savior. I can be the savior of such only as I save. And so if Jesus offers salvation to all, and those who reject his offers are never saved, he is not their savior. They have no salvation either present, or in prospect; and hence no savior.

The promise of salvation however has gone forth—even the salvation of "all the ends of the earth." And as Jesus is commissioned to fulfil that promise—an event which must take place—he justly receives the title of the "Savior of the world."

On this auspicious day then a savior was born into the world. He is yours—he is mine—he is the savior of all the nations, kindreds, families and individuals of the earth.

Here an interesting inquiry arises for our consideration. What came Jesus into the world to save men from? Came he to deliver them from the fathomless abyss of unending and unmitigated torture? Why then has he not expressly declared that this was one object of his mission? Why has no scripture critic affirmed that such was the design of his advent? So far from it, that, on this point, they are as silent as the solemn stillness of the deep damp charnel house. Are we bound then to believe, and shall we be damned for disbelieving what is not a subject of revelation? Certainly not. Although men would vainly endeavor to palm upon us the idea that Jesus came to save mankind from endless torture, it is not for us to be wise above what is written.

Came he then to deliver the world from deserved punishment? This also is not affirmed in the scriptures. It is no where said that such was the object of our Savior's mission. On the contrary it is expressly affirmed that the "wicked shall not go unpunished." "He that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong he hath done, and there is no respect of persons." If then this testimony is true every individual must receive a punishment according to his deeds. No one can

escape it. No one can be saved from it. And if men, in consequence of their sins, deserve an eternity of torture, they must inevitably suffer it.

It is denied however that a single individual deserves such misery. For in the first place it is impossible for a finite being to merit an infinite reward. This is admitted on all hands. No man, by any virtuous or religious act which he is able to perform, can merit an eternity of bliss. And is it not a poor rule that will not operate both ways? Is it not equally impossible for a finite being to commit an act that deserves an eternity of punishment? A fastidious spirituality might deny the position, but common sense would give an affirmative answer. Such punishment would be altogether disproportioned to the crimes committed, and therefore could not be deserved.

But, secondly, the scriptures no where affirm that any individual deserves an endless age of misery for the sins of this short life. Shall we then believe what is proved only by the assertion of fallible men? assertions indeed contradicted by fact. Are men more wise than he who has given us a revelation? Let us not too hastily soar into the regions of imagination, embrace opinions unsupported by evidence, and thus make ourselves more wise than the guide of our faith and the man of our counsel.

The conclusion then is just that Jesus did not come into the world to save mankind from deserved punishment. The question of course returns what came he to save them from? It will be my next business to give a direct answer.

1. He came to save from sin. By reason of this he received his name. "And thou shalt call his name Jesus, because he shall save his people from their sins." Such is the express declaration of unerring truth in relation to the object of our Savior's mission. He came to grant the remission of sin—to turn away ungodliness from Jacob, and purify unto himself a peculiar people. This is an object worthy of him.

Deep and painful is the wound which iniquity has made upon the human heart. It is no vain chimera—no imaginary calamity—no apprehended danger. It is a difficulty in which we are actually involved, an evil indeed to which we all are subject—a malady with which we all are affected. "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." A single glance over the world is sufficient to show the distressing ravages which iniquity has made upon the human heart. It was therefore a benevolent purpose of the most high God to send his only Son to seek and to save that which was lost—to save his people from their sins.

But, strange to relate, we are sometimes gravely told that, if Jesus does not save men from deserved punishment, and if there is no endless misery from which to save them, then his salvation is a salvation from nothing, and he is therefore a useless savior.* But when I hear expressions like these proceed from the lips of professing christians I am astonished at the profound ignorance or deep depravity of man. Do they really mean to say that endless misery is the very essence of all religion? that a deliverance from it is the sole object of our Savior's mission? And yet, at the very next breath they will positively assert that no person, who is actually in hell and suffering its pains, can ever be

saved from it. And certainly a person who is not in it, cannot be saved from it. Such assertions therefore evince the very extreme of ignorance and inconsistency; or, what is worse, the most black and wilful misrepresentation.

Let us examine their own positions for a moment, and see who are in danger of endless misery, and who, on their own ground, stand in need of a savior. Take first the doctrine of election and reprobation. If, from all eternity, a certain number were unconditionally predestinated to the enjoyment of everlasting life, they never were and never can be in danger of endless damnation. The irreversible decree of Almighty God rendered their passage through "this vale of tears" absolutely free from the least danger of such a dreadful catastrophe. What need then have they of a savior? He cannot make their condition more safe. He can effect no salvation, for there is none to be effected. With the elect then a savior is nought but a name—a shadow without a substance.

If, on the other hand, a certain number were unconditionally reprobated, or left, non-elected, to the endurance of never ending misery, ten thousand saviors could never do them any good. The whole creation animated and turned into one common savior could not reverse the irrevocable decree of God. With the non-elect therefore a savior is a mere empty name—

"A charm that lulls to sleep."

The same remarks will apply to the Arminian system. It is true that, to be consistent, the advocates of this system are sometimes obliged to deny that the knowledge of God is absolute and unlimited. But in doing this they open at once the very gates of atheism. If the Almighty does not know with absolute certainty every event that ever has or ever will transpire he is an imperfect God. Those events whose occurrence had not been absolutely foreseen must necessarily bring to the divine mind an acquisition of knowledge. And they occur too by chance. They are undesigned. If some events occur without being foreseen by the Almighty, others may occur in a similar manner. From such a supposition the transition is easy, and natural, and almost inevitable, that every event is undesigned—that there is no God—that all creation, and all its changes and revolutions are the work of blind unguided chance!

Dr. Adam Clarke, to avoid the difficulties and absurdities of unconditional election and reprobation has placed the foreknowledge of God in a very singular light. He supposes the Almighty determined to know some things absolutely and some things contingently. To use his own words: "God has ordained some things as absolutely certain; these he knows as absolutely certain; He has ordained other things as contingent; these he knows as contingent." "He foresees nothing as absolutely and inevitably certain which he has made contingent; and because he has designed it to be contingent, therefore, he cannot know it as absolutely and inevitably certain."* Notwithstanding this acute writer has pronounced it impossible for God to know any event as absolutely certain which he has designed to be contingent, yet the very idea that he ordained some things as contingent, supposes he possessed an absolute knowledge of all the contingencies. An event or circumstance designed as contingent supposes an absolute foreknowledge of the very time and manner of its occurrence. Design indeed proves a knowledge of the very things or events designed. How can a person ordain an event or circumstance and yet not know what he ordains? Such a position is contradictory and absurd. The very idea therefore that God has ordained some things as contingent proves that he knows with unerring

certainly the very things he has ordained, and how and when every thing he has ordained will take place. It is strange that a man possessing so strong powers of mind should make such great ado about the "awful subject" of God's foreknowledge; and yet fall into the very difficulties he was desirous of avoiding. It can only be accounted for in the pertinacity with which men sometimes adhere to a favorite system.

Admit then—what must be admitted to avoid the dismal gulf of atheism—that God is infinite in knowledge; and it must also be admitted that from all eternity he knew with unerring certainty the eternal destiny of every individual. Just as many therefore as he absolutely foresaw would be saved, can never be in danger of endless damnation. Their ultimate happiness is proved to be immutably sure from the fact that it was known to be absolutely certain. It matters not what made it certain, since it was known to be so, they never were and never can be in danger of endless misery. So far as that is concerned they can travel with the most perfect safety through the vale of human life—pass the gloomy Jordan of death, and reach secure the blissful shores of the heavenly Canaan. What need then have they of a Savior? It will not answer to say that in the wise dispensations of providence it was designed that a savior should come to conduct them safely to their destined haven. For the very idea that such a preparation was made would prove their absolute security from all danger. He could not therefore save them from endless misery nor indeed from the danger of it.

And those whom the Almighty foresaw would be damned will walk with the most blind and reckless yet certain step into the very vortex of endless perdition, and no possible force can prevent it—no savior can be of any benefit to them. With such the name is a mere illusive charm calculated to dazzle, and blind, and delude, and thus render their damnation if possible still more certain; and serve perhaps as justification for the conduct of a cruel and malignant judge in sending them to the miserable abodes of unending despair.

On their own ground therefore, unless there is something besides endless misery from which to be saved there is no need of a savior. Savior indeed would be an empty name—a word without a meaning; and salvation a vain chimera—a mere shadow—a fantasy—a salvation from nothing. How strangely men will sometimes throw stones when they themselves reside in buildings made of glass!

But is there nothing else from which to be saved? Is there no condemnation, guilt and pollution in which men are actually involved? Is there no stain upon the character of those who do evil in the sight of God and men? These things cannot be denied. They are truths which, though disgraceful to human nature, are yet too obvious to be disputed. And is there no need that some kind hand should save the world from these distressing evils? Has man sufficient power to save himself from sin? The conduct of the world in all its ages shows that he has not done it. And this is presumptive evidence at least that he has not sufficient power to do it. Hence the situation of man requires the assistance of a savior—it needs the influence of redeeming love to deliver him from the bondage of sin, into the glorious liberty of the children of God. And this was one object of our Redeemer's mission. For this he came into the world—for this he endured the toils and afflictions of life—and for this he bled and died. What tenderness and compassion was here manifested! Who can reflect upon this display of benevolence without being melted into deep contrition, tenderness and love? For us was all this done. For us and all mankind the crimson current of life flowed from the veins of a crucified savior,

*During the late protracted meeting in this place a preacher who officiated made an expression of similar import. Since then Mr. Wood, the Presbyterian clergyman residing in this place, in the fulness of his zeal and opposition to Universalism has taken occasion to repeat it. He seems to consider it a very grand idea—new perhaps to him—and withal a powerful objection to that doctrine.

* Commentary on Acts ii, 47.

2. Jesus came into the world to save mankind from a total "blindness to the future," and the painful apprehensions of annihilation. It was for him "to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and guide our feet in the way of peace."

Before his advent, "darkness covered the earth and gross darkness the people. The grave presented nothing but a blank annihilation. The soul was tortured with the apprehension of an endless sleep, and wearied with the continual search after something that could awaken it from the dismal slumber. All behind it and on either side was mortality; and all before it was oblivion. No cheering ray of light was thrown into the vaulted storehouse of death. Go ask the infidel for he can tell you of the gloom and disquietude that reigned over all the earth before a savior's birth. He has seen in all its horrors the dismal Lethian tide of annihilation."

Does he deny it? Do I hear him whispering that he believes in a future state of existence beyond the narrow precincts of mortality? And from whence arose this belief? Where did he obtain his evidence in support of it? From Paine? Hume? Bollingbroke? And where did they get their testimony? Ah! they stole it. Consummate knaves! they stole it from a risen Savior. And all their followers who believe in a resurrection from the dead are thieves second-handed after these ignoble men. But base ungrateful men they have stolen the glittering robes of Christ, and yet deny their Lord! Where is their shame?

Do they deny the charge? Where then did they learn that death is but the portal to an immortal existence? Is it the voice of nature or the language of philosophy? Ah! no. Nature unaided by revelation is silent on this important point. Ask the inquiring sages of antiquity who lived before the advent of Jesus what they knew of futurity? To them was nature dumb. Its feeble whispers rose not to their ears. And to them also was the language of philosophy equivocal and ambiguous as the Delphic oracle. If it spoke, it was unsatisfactory. For them no murmur issued from the tombs announcing life from death. Are men of the present generation wiser than the sages of antiquity? Are their optics more refined? Is their reason more acute? And why? Because they have sipped the very dew drops of revelation from the lips of their mothers. Happy men! who had mothers that could watch with an angel's care over the cradle of their childhood—mothers who in the fulness of maternal love could instill into their minds those first principles of useful knowledge which should grow with their growth, entwined around every fibre of their heart, and serve as the basis of their subsequent philosophical researches. Happy men! who with every return of the merry Christmas, experience its quickening power in refreshing their minds with those very principles imbibed from maternal lips. How can they doubt a resurrection of the dead? Yet how ungrateful to deny its author!

But there are those who have not such mothers. They need the instruction of the blessed Jesus. They require that very instruction which others have indirectly received from this same exalted Savior. And for this purpose he came into the world, to enlighten the blind eyes of men and demonstrate the fact of a resurrection from the dead. Hence he labored with diligence in the propagation of this happy truth, and sealed his testimony with his own blood. "By his appearing he abolished death and brought life and immortality to light." How rich the boon! how inestimable the knowledge imparted! and how much of the heart's best gratitude is due to him who has given it!

3. But there is yet another object connected with the mission of Christ. He is commission-

ed to save mankind from the cheerless sleep of death. Hear his words. "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." It is for him therefore, in the fulness of times to subdue the "king of terrors," break in upon the "narrow house," and call forth the slumbering millions of the human family.

Death is a doom we all must suffer. We feel and know that we must die. The sick man's chamber tells it. The couch of a dying friend or relative confirms it. The hollow voice of departed heroes and sages, the crumbling monuments erected to the memory of the great, the lettered tombstones of the village churchyard, and even the little mossy mound that marks the resting place of some obscure individual—all add testimony to the solemn truth that "unto dust thou shalt return." "Man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble." Truly "he cometh forth like a flower and is cut down." "One generation passeth away and another cometh" to occupy the busy theatre of life. Death then is a doom in which we all must be involved; and from it also there must be redemption; or else it is a dreary endless sleep.

Jesus however is "the resurrection and the life." Power was given him over all flesh, not only to give eternal life, but to raise again the slumbering dead. When therefore he shall have subdued all things unto himself, he will destroy death, the last enemy of mankind, and save the world from death's embrace. And then shall all the world experience the blessings of his salvation. Then shall they be delivered from sin and death, and ushered into an "inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away." This is the enduring substance which shall continue when all terrestrial things wax old and vanish away.

Such is the splendid consummation of our Savior's mission, such the salvation he was commissioned to accomplish. Truly it may be said he is born a Savior of the world. In view of this well might the angelic messenger announce good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people. And well might a multitude of the heavenly host respond saying, "Glory to God in the highest. The theme is worthy of angelic song. Let saints and men rejoice and chant the anthem of redeeming love. Let the world in one united chorus join the song; for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth, and he hath done wonderful works for the children of men."

May that auspicious day which gave birth to such a Savior long be remembered by the children of men. May its annual return be hailed with transports of joy and emotions of gratitude by all for whom he tasted death, even to the latest generations. And when this splendid plan of salvation is finally consummated, and Jesus shall have accomplished his work of redemption, may the whole world, redeemed from sin and death, unite in the triumphant song of "thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Amen.

Original.

Messrs. EDITORS.—In Dr. Adam Clarke's commentary on the fifth of Romans, he writes as follows: "Now leaving all particular creeds out of the question; and taking in the scope of the Apostle's reasoning in this, and the preceding chapter; is not the sense evidently this? Through the disobedience of Adam, a sentence of condemnation to death, without any promise or hope of a resurrection, passed upon all men; so by the obedience of Christ unto death, this one grand righteous act, the sentence was so far reversed, that death shall not finally triumph; for all shall again be restored to life; justice

must have its due; and therefore all must die. The mercy of God in Christ Jesus, shall have its due also; and therefore all shall be put into a salvable state here, and the whole human race shall be raised to life at the great day."

Now, Messrs. Editors, I challenge you, and all other editors of Universalist papers, to write a paragraph, which more clearly and scripturally expresses universal salvation, than the paragraph here quoted. And I challenge all the believers in Adam Clarke, to deny that he was a Universalist, without making him appear grossly contradictory and absurd. It is here said, that "all shall again be restored to life, that through the mercy of God, in Christ Jesus, the whole human race shall be raised to life, at the great day." This is true, genuine, universalist orthodoxy; and there is no possible way of avoiding the conclusion, but by saying, that through the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, countless millions of the human race will be raised from the sleep of death, to immortal and never ending torment, and by so saying, come to the demonstration, that the resurrection of all men at the great day, (which the Dr. says is through the mercy of God in Christ Jesus) will increase the aggregate of misery, to the human race, a million fold. Such is the demonstrable result, of every system which recognizes the incongruous, and antipode principles, of universal atonement, or redemption, with eternal hell torments.

An Arminian can never be a consistent advocate for endless punishment. To say that God wills the salvation of one, whom he consigns to endless misery, is to utter an absurd falsehood. The Hopkinsonian system, with all its absurdities and horrors, is more consistent with itself, than Arminianism. It is more consistent to believe, that for some unknown purpose, God has eternally decreed the endless punishment of a part of the human race, than to say as the Arminians do, that God will send countless millions to endless suffering, while at the same time he sincerely wishes their salvation, and happiness. For while we may, perhaps, venture to say, the former is possible, we may safely pronounce the latter to be impossible. The common say, that God cannot prevent the endless suffering of his creatures, consistent with their free agency, is a saying void of sense and reason. Does he not tell us, his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure? and does not the reason of every man assent to this? What can be more absurd, than to believe God would give to man an agency which he could not control, an agency which should defeat his benevolent purposes, and thereby make himself unhappy, and his creatures whom he tenderly loves, eternally wretched? Does not the reason which he has given to man pronounce a being who would so conduct, an unwise being? Why then do men of common sense delude themselves and the world with such absurdities?

Dr. Clarke was great in the languages, and in history, but a weak reasoner; and it is rare we find in an author of his reputation, so many palpable contradictions. In his comments on this same fifth of Romans, he writes as follows: "It was better therefore to let the same pair continue to fulfil the great end of their creation, by propagating their like upon the earth, and to introduce an antidote to the poison, and by a dispensation, as strongly expressive of wisdom, as of goodness, to make the ills of life, which were the consequences of their transgression, the means of correcting the evil, and through the wondrous economy of grace, sanctifying even them to the eternal good of the soul." The Dr. here tells us that the ills of life which are a consequence of transgression, are made the means of correcting the evil. What is this, but to say, that sufferings which are a consequence

of sin, are made the means of destroying sin, and that the effect reacts and destroys the cause? Now compare this with what he says in his comments on the next chapter. 'That is, the effect of a cause can become so powerful as to react upon that cause, and produce its annihilation—the divinity and philosophy, of this sentiment, are equally absurd. It is the blood of Christ alone, that cleanseth from all unrighteousness.' A few lines further on he tells us 'the death of Christ, was on account of sin,' that is, sin was the cause of the death of Christ, and the death or blood of Christ, that which cleanseth from all unrighteousness. Hence the Dr. is found advocating a sentiment, which in almost the same breath he pronounces unscriptural, unphilosophical, and absurd. In several places of his commentary, he ridicules the idea that suffering, can be made the means of destroying sin, alleging it to be absurd, inasmuch as the effect would destroy the cause. And the most of his sermon entitled justification by faith, is taken up with the same argument—an argument, the contrary of which, shines so clearly through the Bible, that he is frequently found to be in direct contradiction with himself.

In other things, he is equally contradictory. He is a strong advocate for the real divinity, or deity of Jesus Christ, yet denies that he existed before the Virgin Mary: for he denies the orthodox doctrine of the eternal sonship of Christ, and the Arian doctrine of his being created in time. How then could he exist before the Virgin Mary? I am aware that he attempts to obviate this by saying, there is essentially and eternally a plurality in the deity, or that the Godhead eternally existed in three distinct persons. He argues this from such expressions as these: 'Let us make man.' Now the Jewish writers tell us that their nouns and pronouns admit of a plural, as well as of the singular number, hence they say, when we read in the 53d chapter of Isaiah such expressions as these: 'He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities, and by his stripes we are healed,' &c. that they do not refer to their Messiah, but to their nation at large. But it does not appear that any Jew ever had an idea of a plurality, or of three persons in the Godhead. On the contrary the have ever pronounced such a sentiment, "an absurd, and corrupt tenet."

But granting this part of the argument fully to the Doctor, how is it possible for him to make it appear, that Jesus Christ the Son of God, ever existed before the Virgin Mary? For he contends, he did not exist from eternity, neither was he created in time. It follows then as certain, either that Jesus Christ the Son of God, never had an existence, or never existed before the Virgin Mary.

As the doctor is remarkable for his contradictions, he is equally so for his whimsical credulity. I have room to mention but one instance. Passing over his quarrang-outang that tempted Eve, I advert to his comment on the 25th of Matthew. The account of the sheep and goats he tells us alludes to the last judgment, and the passage which reads, "When the Son of man, shall appear in his glory, with his holy angels." He observes that the word holy, is not in the original. Hence he infers that all the angels, both good and bad, that is, that all the good angels, and all the devils, will compose his illustrious train. But what does he bring the devils with him for? Why, to be ready to seize their prey. Thus after our Savior has died, to 'destroy the works of the devil,' and thereby to save the whole human race, he is still so accommodating as to bring the devil in his train, to divide the spoil with him. To the devil he gives far the greater part, to torment forever and ever, and takes the smaller number to himself, who are to be so refined, that a part of their felicity is to consist in seeing, and rejoicing, in the endless

torture of their fellow creatures. This, according to Dr. Clarke, is the result of that benevolent system, the advocates of which hesitate not to say, that Calvinism represents God as worse than the devil. Z. G.

FROM THE TRUMPET AND MAGAZINE. EXPOSITOR AND REVIEW.

The first number of a work with the above title, edited by Rev. Hosea Ballou, 2d, has recently been issued from the press of Wait & Dow of this city. It is intended to supply the place of the Universalist Expositor, two volumes only of which were published by Marsh & Capen. The need of such a work has long been felt by many sincere friends to the cause of liberal Christianity. It is indeed a desideratum in the Universalist denomination. A very general regret was expressed at its discontinuance, and an equally general joy will be awakened by the commencement of a similar work. For myself, I can truly say that I hail its appearance with all the cordiality of my heart; and this sentiment will, I have no doubt, be every where responded. The contents of the present number I have perused with great satisfaction and profit. The articles are all upon subjects of high importance and handled with ability, especially the first and last. Without any disparagement to the others, I may be allowed to say, that these are pre-eminently valuable productions: Their characters are widely different; but both are discussed with great candor and faithfulness, and prominently marked by that persevering patience of research which distinguishes their authors. They ought to be read by every Universalist in our country and the world; and not only read, but studied till their contents are indelibly impressed upon the memory. What a cheering prospect does the article on the present state of the doctrine and denomination of Universalists spread out before us? Who that has the glorious cause we have espoused near at heart, can survey it without "leaping and praising and giving glory to God?" Surely no one.

And who can rationally doubt that the rapid increase of preachers, and societies, and places of public worship, within a few years past, is attributable in a great measure to the widely extended influence of our religious periodicals? No one, if I am not grossly mistaken, can do this. Now the Expositor and Universalist Review, it is believed, will be a timely and powerful coadjutor. The state also of our order at the present time seems imperiously to demand a publication of the kind. Its form and character are more grave and commanding than those of a weekly journal.

It will also admit of more elaborate and extended disquisitions in the different branches of biblical science, and especially in the more abstruse and perplexing topics in the general system of theology. This circumstance will render it essentially serviceable to preachers whose location and pecuniary means do not afford them access to more voluminous works, particularly the young preachers, and to many lay brethren, in various places, who are obliged to stand alone, to contend single handed against the arts of learned pride and the vauntings of supercilious power. It may be further remarked, that the character and design of this work are not such as to interfere improperly with any other religious publication. It will therefore be free from every thing like competition. So far as the work itself is concerned, it has, I believe, the approbation of the preachers and editors throughout the order. All, so far as I am acquainted, have expressed a desire for such a publication.

But still, to secure the success of the enterprise, it will be necessary that those lay brethren, whose circumstances will permit, should extend to it their fostering care and patronage. It is not expected that weekly publications will

be relinquished; but there are great numbers in our connexion, who can add the Expositor and Universalist Review to those papers they have heretofore taken without inconvenience to their pecuniary affairs. The aid of all such is respectfully solicited, and should it be granted, as I doubt not it will be, at least in many cases, it will enable those brethren who have generously embarked in this noble enterprise, to give their work a respectable rank among similar publications in our country. And what will my brethren, upon whom providence has bestowed the means with a lavish hand, do in this case? Will they not aid in its circulation? S. S.

FROM THE MAGAZINE AND ADVOCATE. GENUINE PARTIALISM.

Under this head there appeared in the Christian Messenger, of January 5th, an extract from the writings of Thomas Vincent, London, 1667. The selector of it, Br. A. C. T. says, "The medicines prescribed by modern Doctors of Divinity for the morally diseased are not half so strongly spiced with the wrath of God as were the remedies administered in former times."

Now, Messrs. Editors, I think our brother need not have gone as far back, nor as far distant, to have given us as "well spiced" (or as well peppered) a discourse on genuine Calvinism; for not long since a Presbyterian lady put into my hand a funeral sermon, preached in Otsego, N. Y., by the Rev. J. T. Benedict, A. D. 1815—and although it may have escaped the notice of liberal minded men, yet it had an extensive circulation. I venture to send you an extract, rather as a set off for London divines, than in expectation of its usefulness; though you will agree with me, that it gives a very splendid view of the judgment day. I have been a believer in universal holiness and happiness for twenty years or more, but I must confess so elegant an appeal to the feelings—so consistent an explanation of the intricacies of the doctrine of election, if it has not made me waver it has at least made me tremble. But to the extract.

"The separation between saints and sinners will excite sensations which can never be known until experienced. Parents may know, in this life, what it is to part with an affectionate child in death; but in this life they cannot know what it is to see their child or children sink forever into everlasting burnings. The decision on the day of judgment will be trying beyond description—separations will then take place, and friends and relations part, and part forever. The faithful ministers* of Jesus will be separated from many of their hearers; they will behold them driven away in their wickedness under the deepest conviction, and can tender them no mercy. Wives and husbands, parents and children, brothers and sisters, must behold their impenitent relatives sink in eternal death, and ever after they will behold their sufferings, and hear their weepings, wailings, and gnashing of teeth.

"If the friends of God, at this time should not possess unconditional submission, they would fill heaven with lamentations, mourning, and wof. They will now see that all the damned and their sufferings were in the immutable purposes of God; that one important end designed by their miseries is to manifest unconditional submission. They will then find by the most happy experience, that the covenanted grace of God extended into eternity, and will be their support forever. Their submission, like the submission of Habakkuk, will fill their mouths with praise, and while the smoke of the damned is ascending up forever and ever, they will sing *alleluia, amen.*" *Verbatim et literatim.*

Comment, as Br. A. C. T. says, is unnecessary. *Sheshequin, Pa. Jan. 14, 1833.* K.

*Who would not be a minister? †What a heaven?

CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

EDITED BY T. J. SAWYER AND P. PRICE, NEW-YORK,
AND ABEL C. THOMAS, PHILADELPHIA.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 1833.

JUST PUBLISHED.

At this office, in a neat pamphlet form, for distribution, the CORRESPONDENCE, inserted in No. 11, between a member of the Reformed Dutch Church, and a Universalist. We believe this will be found an excellent little work to put in the hands of those disposed to examine into the spirit and doctrines of Universalism. Even the most fastidious of the Reformed Dutch, we should think, could not object to the MANNER in which the Universalists' argument is conducted. Price \$2, per hundred, 3 cts single.

WEDNESDAY EVENING MEETINGS.

A course of meetings have been commenced in the Lecture Room of the Orchard-street Church, and will be continued every Wednesday evening. Exercises to commence at 7 o'clock. The primary object is moral and religious improvement. Addresses may always be expected. Friends of the doctrine of God's impartial grace, both Ladies and Gentlemen, are earnestly invited to attend. The meetings will generally be found interesting, and we doubt not profitable.

TRAVELING AGENT.

We have pleasure in stating that Br. S. J. HILLYER is now travelling on an agency for this Paper, in collecting, and procuring subscribers. He designs visiting the principal places within a convenient distance of this city, during this winter. Any facilities our friends in different places can afford him will be thankfully acknowledged.

LETTERS TO THE REV. DR. BROWN-LEE—NO. I.

Rev'd and Dear Sir,—

The conspicuous part you have of late been induced to take against the doctrine of God's impartial grace, would offer a sufficient apology, if any were necessary, for my thus publicly addressing you. And I trust you will neither think me performing a work of supererogation, nor actuated by any feelings unworthy of a christian, while with honest frankness, I present yourself, and the numerous readers of the Messenger, with the views I entertain of your recent Lectures in opposition to the glorious truth that God "is the Savior of all men."

It may indeed seem presumptuous for one of so humble attainments as myself to call in question the conclusions, deliberately formed, of an individual, whose age, extensive erudition, and distinguished talents, command for him the most favorable consideration of the public, and whose established reputation, as a profound theologian, shields him in the opinion of thousands, from the suspicion of opposing truth, or advocating error. But, sir, with all becoming deference, you will permit me to say with the young Elihu,* "Great men are not always wise, neither do the aged understand judgment. Therefore, I said, Hearken to me; I also will shew mine opinion."

Revealed truth I conceive to be much more simple, and much more easily attained, than the religious world is generally disposed to imagine; so that it becomes the bounden duty of all, without pretending to any exemption from the common liabilities of our race to err, but with the bible open before them, to examine every sentiment that is advanced, and of themselves to judge, with pains-taking honesty, what is right. It is an authoritative injunction of Paul† to "prove all things, and hold fast that which is good;" and in conformity with the same principle, the beloved disciple‡ exhorts

* Job. xxxii. 9, 10.

† 1 Thess. v. 21.

‡ 1 John. iv. 1.

us to "believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God." The very existence of these apostolic exhortations implies, that christians have an ability to judge between religious truth and religious error; and although it does not imply any infallibility in their judgment, it is sufficient to condemn not only a bigoted attachment to our own and a contempt for the opinions of others, but also that distrust of our understanding which forbids us to question the truth of any doctrine that is sanctioned by high human authority, or consecrated, in public estimation, by the lapse of ages. How marked has been the disrespect with which christians have generally treated these injunctions, and how lamentable has been the consequence to the cause of christianity, the history of the past will afford abundant evidence.

It is not presumptuous, then, under these directions of the word of God for the private christian to differ from the most distinguished uninspired teachers of his religion, because he has the clear warrant of the divine oracles, to prove all things and hold fast only that which is good. And it is hardly to be doubted, if conformity to this spirit of the gospel were more general than it now is, that the great interests of truth and righteousness would be vastly better subserved. "Heresies," to use the language of a late celebrated writer, "have seldom or never taken their rise from the mass of the people." The numerous corruptions of christianity, which even now mar its beauty and usefulness, owe their origin to men of learning, "of leisure and speculation"—men whose finespun theories might entangle, if they could not satisfy humbler minds, and whose station gave them a species of invisible but recognized authority over the consciences of other people.

The subject to which you have of late directed your own and the public attention, is, I am able to assure you, worthy your notice. I know it is fashionable among Limitarian Clergymen to treat Universalism with affected contempt—to pass it by with marked silence, or if they speak of it at all, to speak in terms of scoffing and ridicule, as of something too absurd to be believed—to assail it with puerile witticisms, and all the pungency of idle and fictitious anecdote. In short, it is common with that class of persons, either ignorantly or maliciously, to misrepresent its doctrines and calumniate its advocates and professors—to rank the latter among blasphemers, drunkards, profane swearers, "the offscouring of all things"—and the former with the quintessence of all that is damnable, "the doctrines of the devil." How well adapted such a course of conduct is, to advance truth, and build up the Messiah's kingdom; I shall not here stop to decide, and will only say there are two prominent considerations that seem to me sufficient to demand of our Limitarian brethren a more candid and christianlike attention to this subject. The first is the importance which the denomination of Universalists is assuming, and the wide and rapid diffusion which their sentiments are gaining in the United States. The second is the nature and tendency of the doctrine itself.

With respect to the first of these considerations, it is almost needless for me to remark, what you are probably already apprised of, that Universalism was first preached in America but little more than sixty years since, and that there are now in the United States between 300 and 400 preachers of this faith, the great majority of whom are zealous young men, who have devoted their lives to

the dissemination of what they believe to be the gospel of Christ. The number of persons who have embraced this faith, including their families who are taught it, cannot be definitely calculated, but may without extravagance be set at half a million. This number of both ministers and people is multiplying in a ratio that will double it in seven years. And yet some Limitarian clergymen seem to indulge the pleasing idea that universalism is unworthy their notice, that a silly story, or a witty saying is enough to crush the monster—or, in fine, that it is so supremely absurd and ridiculous that "no man possessing two grains of common sense can believe it." Such was not the opinion of Edwards, nor of Beecher, nor of Stuart, and such, I am happy to add, is not the opinion of Dr. Brownlee. No, sir, you have judged right. Universalism is too well established in the United States, too ardently loved and too zealously promulgated, to be annihilated, or endangered, at this late day, by silence and affected contempt, or by a sneer or a laugh. And to those who are of a different opinion on this subject, I will only say, let the present policy of our Limitarian brethren be pursued twenty years longer, and we shall see whether Universalism is unworthy their notice, or whether misrepresentation and ridicule will effectually subvert their purposes. Universalism will then, unless I have much mistaken the signs of the times, have gained its prime of manhood. Even now, sir, if it be an error, it is not to be despised; and I trust you will not think it vanity in me, or a disparagement to yourself, if I modestly intimate that the infant Hercules, who perished not in embrace of an Edwards, will, in the vigor of his youth hardly feel the pressure of an arm less muscular than his.

The second consideration, which, in my humble opinion, ought to commend Universalism to the most serious and prayerful attention of Limitarians, is the nature and tendency of the doctrine itself. In the whole circle of theological investigation there are, I conceive, few subjects of more general or thrilling interest, than the question, Are all men to become finally holy and happy? To say that it concerns the happiness of each and every one of us, and that it appeals to our most generous sympathies, and our purest and holiest feelings, is to speak only of its humblest claims. It goes infinitely farther. It affects the very character and throne of God himself. Speculate and theorize, and darken as you may, sir, there is no argument nor sophistry on earth, that, admitting the doctrine of endless punishment, can preserve unimpaired the divine attributes. What almost inconceivably important consequences then are involved in this question! What attention does it deserve! And yet, I am grieved to say it, the great majority of our Limitarian brethren, both laity and clergy, pass it by with sovereign contempt. Occasionally, it is true, we meet with an individual, who has made it a subject of some thought and investigation. But generally speaking, professed christians have been taught, from their very cradles, that the doctrine of endless misery is not only a cardinal doctrine of the Christian religion, but the main pillar of the temple of virtue, and that to enquire farther is to doubt, and to doubt is to hazard their eternal salvation. Under such circumstances, it is not singular that Universalism is little understood. "Like priest, like people." The minister himself would sooner think of reading the Koran than a volume advocating Universalism. But he is not always admonished by his ignorance to keep silence, and

then his wondering congregation goes from the sanctuary of God, believing that, "if Universalism were to prevail in our country, these United States would become a hell!!" Nor is it singular while people listen with all devouring credulity, to such wholesale abuse, that they avoid as poison every thing that pertains to the reprobated doctrine—that they honestly suppose it "a tissue of contradictions," and are led to regard its advocates as destitute of either common sense or common honesty.

I know there is a popular impression resting on the public mind that Universalism shrinks from investigation, and that its advocates studiously avoid "an open field and fair play." But, Sir, it is not so. Universalism shrinks from no investigation. It seeks for no concealment. Like christianity itself it challenges the former and despises the latter. The invitation I gave you to repeat your late Lectures in the Orchard-street Church, where I stately minister, and where a whole congregation of Universalists might have heard, little favors the idea that we dread an exposure of our faith. No, sir, if we are in an error, "a fatal error," we should thank that man who should point it out and convince us of it. We wish not to be deceived, nor would we willingly deceive others. But for myself, I shall "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," as I understand it, and with my feeble ability shall endeavor to defend it against every attack.

I will not farther weary your patience. You will hereafter hear from me frequently in this manner. It will be my business to pass in review the principal positions and arguments, which you have advanced in your late course of Lectures; and if I am so unfortunate as to misrepresent you, the columns of the Messenger will always be open for your corrections. Meanwhile with all due respect,

I remain Yours &c. THOMAS J. SAWYER.
Rev. W. C. BROWNLEE, D. D. New-York.

LETTERS TO DR. BROWNLEE.

It will be perceived that the Senior Editor has commenced in the present No. a course of Letters to the Rev. Dr. Brownlee, of the Middle Dutch Church in this city. For the information of many recent subscribers to the Messenger it may be proper to observe, that a course of Lectures against Universalism, was commenced about the first of Nov. last, by Dr. Brownlee. The question in discussion was, "Is Universalism consistent with reason and revelation?" The high reputation of Dr. Brownlee for piety, candor, and talents, gave us good reason to suppose that in his hand the subject would have an impartial and respectful investigation. And in the first No. of the present volume, in an article by the Senior Editor, it was remarked, that however Dr. Brownlee's conclusions might differ from those of the Universalist, there was a full confidence that he would "treat both Universalism and Universalists with respect." How lamentably disappointed we have been in this expectation, the sequel will show.

From the testimony of many friends who have been present, and the copious notes we have of two or three of the Lectures, we are surprised beyond measure that the Doctor has dealt so largely in dogmatical assertion, and so little in argument. The experienced Universalist, it is true, could generally expect little else, but we had confidently hoped that the talented and distinguished Dr. Brownlee would prove an exception—that he would have had

too sacred a regard for his own dignity and standing in the religious world, ever to let himself down to vulgar witticism on so important a subject.

It may be of some interest to our subscribers, in the country particularly, to be made acquainted with the train of circumstances calling forth the Letters commenced in this No.

Of the first Lecture of Dr. Brownlee report spoke quite favorably. It presaged a candid examination of the subject. The Senior Editor of the Messenger immediately called on him, soliciting a copy for publication, but was informed that it was the first of a course, the publication of which had not yet been thought of, and it was doubtful what would be the conclusion, at their termination.

A very different report was given of the second. The Senior Editor immediately addressed a respectful note to Dr. Brownlee, inviting him to repeat his Lectures in the Orchard-street Church. To this note, or rather to a second one, after some days, he received a very polite reply, declining the invitation, with several reasons therefor. Immediately after this, another note was addressed Dr. Brownlee, expressive of regret that he could not find it convenient to comply with the previous invitation, and requesting a copy of his discourses—the second in particular. In this note it was stated frankly, that the object was a public examination of the Lectures—that by the kindness of friends we had been furnished with extensive notes, but "as it was not the wish to take advantage of any misapprehension which hearers might have made of his observations, a copy was thus solicited under his own hand. Some days elapsed and another note of inquiry was addressed him, to which a reply was received, declining the request, alleging as a principal reason the want of time to transcribe his notes. To us this appeared as a very singular excuse—for if the subject was of importance enough to deserve his public labors in the pulpit, it surely was worthy of a little time in preparing the result of those labors for general and extensive circulation. As every measure in obtaining a copy from under his own hand, had thus failed, we were compelled to furnish ourselves in the best way possible. Through the kindness of several friends who were present, and by the advantage of stenographic notes of two or three of the Lectures, we are prepared with most of the positions of the Doctor, and much of his language. With these facilities, the Senior Editor proposes delivering a course of lectures in reply, at the Orchard-st. church, on Sabbath evenings, and to follow them with a series of Letters through the Messenger, embodying the principal arguments of his lectures and passing in review what may be regarded the main arguments of Dr. Brownlee. The introductory Lecture was given Sunday evening, week. The first regular Lecture in course, may be expected to-morrow evening, commencing at seven o'clock.

We doubt not the subject will be of sufficient importance to make ample amends for the space it may occupy in our columns. And although the opposing views may be found weak and puerile, yet coming from the source they do, they may be regarded as worthy of some notice.

Some of our friends have suggested the propriety of transferring the matter from the paper, into a pamphlet form, and publishing a supply at a cheap rate for distribution. We think of doing it. Will those of our patrons in the city, who feel more immediately interested, communicate with us on the subject.

"PLAIN TRUTH."

A note from the writer over this signature in reply to our request of last week for an interview, is received. We can only say to him, the reasons assigned for declining the desired interview, are not satisfactory to us. At least, we do not feel called upon to insert communications of that particular character, while the name of the writer is withheld on grounds so slight as we must view those given by "Plain Truth." We know not what just direction "opposers of Universalism" can have in the thing. The writer certainly could not expect we intended connecting his name with the article, through our paper; and surely his name might be safely lodged with us. If not, we should hardly think the communication itself could be safely entrusted to our hands. The writer will therefore understand, as we observed last week, that we cannot publish articles of that precise character, without knowing our authority. We have ever aimed to pursue a perfectly honorable course through our columns, towards both friends and opponents, and we cannot now knowingly deviate from that purpose.

A MS. was recently put into my hands by an aged member of the Society with which I am connected. It contains several hundred maxims, with many of which I have been much pleased. They were written in part, and in part compiled, by a Quaker cousin, (now deceased) of the person to whom the manuscript belongs. I purpose presenting the most interesting and profitable to the readers of the Messenger, premising that I shall take the liberty to make such alterations and additions as may be thought advisable. They may be styled,

A BOOK OF PROVERBS.

CHAPTER I.

1. Never allow thyself to be so far provoked by injuries, as to commit them.
2. Wink at small faults, for thou hast great ones.
3. Permit not thyself to think of what thou mayst not act.
4. Make no certain promise of what is uncertain.
5. Attempt nothing for which thou canst not pray to God.
6. Better stay at home than travel with thieves.
7. Endeavor for the best, and provide against the worst.
8. If thou wilt reap comfort in adversity, sow it in prosperity.
9. Publish not too much what thou meanest to do; it is blowing a trumpet to call up and make opposers and competition.
10. Tell nothing to him that thou thinkest will not believe thee. he will think ill of thee and despise thee.
11. Punish not when thou art angry; for that will vex thee when the fit is over.
12. Govern thy life and thoughts, as if the whole world were to see the one and read the other.
13. Better break thy word than do worse in keeping it.
14. Envy no man's talent, but endeavor to improve thy own.
15. Think of ease, but work on.
16. When thou hast a mind to sin, find out a place where God and conscience cannot see.
18. Answer argument with reason. If reason will not be heard or approved, then answer them with silence.
18. Thou oughtest to be nice even to superstition, in keeping thy promises; therefore thou shouldst be equally cautious in making them.
19. Bind so as thou mayst unbind.

20. Let thy prayers be as fervent as thy wants; and thy thanksgivings as thy blessings.
A. C. T.

MORE CONVERSIONS IN THE MINISTRY.

It must be a source of unfeigned gratification to the Universalist public, to witness the rapid increase of conversions to their faith from the Limitarian ministry. Scarcely a week passes but more or less are announced in some section of our country. A week or two since, we noticed one in the town of Volney, in this state, from the Utica Magazine and Advocate. The same paper of the 3d instant, contains an account of THREE more—A Mr. Davis in Peru, who has lately seceded from the Christians—a Mr. Martin Tracy, of Bronson, from the Presbyterians, and a Mr. Clark, who has been a preacher of the Methodist doctrines for six years past. It is said that Mr. Tracy's parents at first gave him up for lost, but by his arguments and an unbiased examination of Scripture, they are now brought to worship under the same vine and fig-tree. A correspondent of the Magazine in London, Upper Canada, states that an Episcopal preacher has lately appeared among them "preaching strange doctrines to some," but which the writer says is none other than Universalism.

And will Limitarians continue to fold their arms, and pronounce Universalism unworthy their notice? Is it so perfectly beneath a thought, when to the thousands of the laity who are constantly entering the glorious light and liberty of its doctrines, is added the weekly and almost daily conversion of limitarian preachers to its cheering faith? And in view of these things, can they still have the hardihood to seize upon solitary instances of individuals, who may not have led a very circumspect life, and have finally been frightened into the profession of limitarian sentiments by the terrors of *revival preaching*, or a prospect of death, and proclaim them to the world as an evidence of the falsity of Universalism, and its *rapid decline*, when, perhaps, the only test of the Universalism of these very individuals is, that they may have by chance, once or twice during their lives heard a Universalist preach? And can they prevent no better arguments than these to prevent the daily secession from their own ranks?

But it is perhaps useless to press these considerations. It would seem that if they had any disposition to profit by experience, they have already evidence enough before them—having emphatically had "line upon line and precept upon precept." And whether they will reflect or forbear, one event is certain—a spirit of inquiry is abroad, which all the combined forces of bigotry and popular prejudices and feeling can never stay. And we, in common with our friends, cannot but joy in its rational progress. P.

RELIGIOUS INQUIRER.

The last number of the Inquirer closed the 11th volume. The 12th vol. will commence on the 23d inst. enlarged to an imperial form, folio, at \$2 per annum in advance, and \$2 50 if not paid within six months. We perceive that Br. Charles Spear has retired from the editorial department, and that it will hereafter be under the direction of our worthy brethren, Robert Smith, of Middletown, and John Boyden, Jr. of Berlin. Our best wishes will follow Br. Spear, and also attend his successors in the editorial chair. They are both "good men and true."

Of the propriety of the change in the form of the Inquirer we are not prepared to judge. Though in whatever form it may be presented, we hope it will be abundantly sustained; and that it may long throw its "inquiring" glance abroad in the religious world. P.

VERMONT STATE CONVENTION.

Agreeable to previous notice, this body was organized at Montpelier, Vt. on the 16th ult. Brs. J. E. Palmer, Moderator, and J. M. Austin and J. Wright, Clerks. A constitution was presented and adopted. Letters of Fellowship were granted to Brs. Flavins J. Briggs, Joseph Hemphill, and Oliver Wright, and ordination conferred on Br. J. M. Austin, settled at Montpelier. Br. Austin was appointed Standing Clerk of the Convention. Fourteen ministering Brethren were present, and five discourses were delivered. The Congregationalist Society, in the true spirit of christian charity, offered the use of their commodious meeting-house. And we ever take pleasure in recording evidences of friendly feeling like this. Would that they were more frequent.

Original.

PROGRESS OF LIBERAL SENTIMENTS.

Whoever takes a retrospective view of the past, must see that the doctrine of Universal Salvation has made rapid progress. The chains of prejudice and error have been broken. The light of truth has dispelled the darkness of ignorance and superstition. The heart chilling and gloomy theology which once shrouded Christendom has been gradually modified, and many of its most horrid features have been laid aside. Numberless minds have been awakened by the power of truth. Many have been forced to acknowledge the worth, and the beauty, and the majesty of that doctrine which breathes 'peace on earth and good will to men.' A gradual and a glorious emancipation is taking the place of slavery and death. Hymns of praise and thanksgiving ought to ascend from every heart for the success which has crowned our efforts. A few years ago and this world was looked on as a kind of dark and gloomy valley through which the great mass of its inhabitants were passing to endless darkness and despair. But now it is as though a new creation had sprung up before the eyes of men. Beauty and joy are seen in every object. The smile of the great Creator and the love of the Father are every where exhibited. Such a change is refreshing and gladdening to the heart. Still, the cause of liberal principles is onward. Though we rejoice much in the light that has burst upon the world, yet the writer has sometimes thought we are only enjoying the morning of a glorious day. The holy scriptures in the images of beauty which they present to us certainly denote a greater glory than has yet been seen. 'Moreover, the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound.' This is strong, figurative language, but is not without its meaning. The minds of the inspired writers were so full of truth and joy that even all the beauties of creation were insufficient to set forth the grandeur of their views. Who then can read the Bible, and come short of the great conclusion that Jehovah intends the happiness of a world? Being satisfied that such is his original determination, it becomes our duty to lend every power of the mind to the advancement of the great object. Our cause is the noblest in which human beings were ever engaged. Let a zealous determination pervade the hearts of all its advocates, and success will be certain. C. S.

Original.

A certain D. D. of this city who has delivered a couple of Lectures to disprove the absurd doctrine of Universalism, and now finds twice as many required to defend his own orthodoxy—gravely informed his numerous auditors, a few Sabbath evenings since, that *punishment for sin*,

could never be inflicted for the purpose of *reformation*, but as an example to others, and referred to the *laws of men*, as satisfactory proof of God's design in everlasting punishment. He admitted, that the good men and benevolent feelings of the age had mitigated the cruelties of punishment; yet it could never be intended as disciplinary. How much better the men, and more benevolent the feelings of this age, than God is, the Rev. gentleman did not say.

Quere. Will the Doctor inform the public whether the "finally impenitent" are to be kept in *endless torments*, only as examples for the benefit of the blessed in heaven? Will they need such an example to keep them holy?

Again, was it not a little Pharisical, Doctor, to say, that if you and your friends were in heaven and should see some who had suffered their time out in purgatory, you should consider them stamped with the mark of infamy, and should say to them "STAND OFF!" Methinks you should have allowed pride to have finished the sentence with—"I AM HOLIER THAN THOU!" Z.

FOR THE MESSENGER.

AN INCIDENT.

On a late tour I called at a stranger's house to warm, and accidentally dropped a pamphlet entitled, "Important questions with scripture answers." A little child picking it up asked if I would give it him. His request was granted. The aged grandmother, a limitarian lady, learning that religion was its theme, adjusted her spectacles and commenced reading, but very soon cries out, "Mister! I perceive that this book teaches that all men will be saved." Ah! Madam, and how did you discover that? "Why I see it in the very first passage." Then it seems the scriptures clearly teach Universalism.

S. J. H.

*. Persons having business to transact with the Messenger Office, will please apply at No. 2, Marble Building, Chatham-Square.

DIED.

In this city Helen Maria, daughter of Jonathan Trappagen, aged 3 years.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Aspasio is received and would be attended to, did we not feel that he has already been indulged much farther than an anonymous writer under his circumstances ought to expect. We did not ask him for the name of the preacher from whom he extracted, (for of that we were previously aware, and that simple circumstance gave us good reason to doubt his motives from the first,) but we asked for his own name, and we can hardly believe him to have understood us otherwise. His last communication renders it still further necessary that we should have it, for if we must meet personal abuse in our own columns, we wish of course to know from whom it comes. When he can come forward honorably, and leave with us his name, as we requested before, he will receive his desired attention, and not till then. S.

Br. Spear will accept our thanks for his two favors, one of which will be found in our columns of to day. We rejoice that he is not "weary in well doing," and as one among his friends, we shall ever be glad to hear from him.

Br. Wells' article is received, but is necessarily laid over till next week.

S. J. H. and B. B. H. in our next.

RELIGIOUS NOTICE.

Br. S. J. Hillyer will preach in New Brunswick to-morrow 17th inst. He will thence visit the principal places in Somerset, Hunterdon, Warren, Sussex, and Morris counties.

JOB PRINTING.

The proprietor of the Messenger is now prepared to execute common JOB PRINTING, with promptness, and on the lowest terms.

Original

THE BRIDESMAID.

And then art happy! 'tis well,
It is thy wedding day;
But memory hangs a mournful spell,
Around my heart—the sad farewell!
I cannot say.

No more red roses we shall bind,
Or hear each others tone;
Mine is a pensive, tortur'd mind,
No comfort can my sad heart find—
I sigh alone.

'Tis weak, 'tis cruel to complain;
Such grief I should forego,
But all resistance is in vain.
Tho' bliss awaits thee o'er the plain,
It brings me woe.

But thou art happy. Ever dear,
May pleasure be thy lot.
Yet let not her who loves thee here,
And sheds the solitary tear,
Be e'er forgot.

When he who won thy virgin heart,
Thy rosy lips shall press,
Think upon one, devoid of art,
Who basely covets all thy heart,
And weeps, with less.

And should an infant image spring
From holy wedlocks ties,
O! think, when thou aside dost fling
Its curling locks, the light to bring
From sunny eyes,

On one, who to this festive hour,
Has no responsive tone;
But flies unto the once lov'd bower,
Deviated now of half its power,
To weep alone.

M.

TALE FROM THE GERMAN.

In that beautiful part of Germany which borders on the Rhine, there is a noble castle, which as you travel on the western banks of the river, you may see lifting its ancient towers on the opposite side, above the grove of trees which are about as old as itself. About forty years ago there lived in that castle a noble gentleman whom we call Baron. The Baron had an only son, who was not only a comfort to his father, but a blessing to all who lived on his father's land.

It happened on a certain occasion, that this young man being from home, there came a French gentleman to see the Baron. As soon as this gentleman came into the castle, he began to talk of his Heavenly Father in terms that chilled the old man's blood! on which the Baron reproved him, saying, "Are you not afraid of offending God, who reigns above, by speaking in such a manner?"

The gentleman said that he knew nothing about God; for he had never seen him.

The Baron did not notice at this time what the gentleman said, but the next morning took him about his castle and ground, and took occasion first to show him a very beautiful picture that hung on the wall.

The gentleman admired the picture very much; and said, "Whoever drew this picture, knows very well how to use his pencil."

"My son drew that picture," said the Baron.

"Then your son is a very clever man," replied the gentleman.

The Baron then went with his visitor into the garden, and shewed him many beautiful flowers and plantations of forest trees.

"Who has the ordering of this garden?" asked the gentleman.

"My son," replied the Baron; "he knows every plant, I may say, from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop on the wall."

"Indeed," said the gentleman, "I shall think very highly of him soon."

The Baron then took him into the village, and showed him a small, neat cottage, where his son established a school, and where he caused

all young children, who had lost their parents, to be received and nourished at his own expense.

The children in the house looked so innocent and so happy, that the gentleman was very much pleased, and when he returned to the castle he said to the Baron, "what a happy man you are to have so good a son."

"How do you know I have a good son?"

"Because I have seen his works, and I know that he must be both good and clever if he has done all you have shown me."

"But you have never seen him."

"No, but I know him very well, because I judge of him by his work."

"You do; and now please to draw near this window, and tell me what you observe from thence."

"Why, I see the sun travelling through the sky, and shedding its glories over one of the finest countries in the world; and I behold a mighty river at my feet, and a vast range of woods. I see pasture grounds, and orchards, and vineyards; and cattle and sheep feeding in green fields; and many thatched cottages scattered here and there."

"And do you see any thing to be admired in all this? Is there any thing pleasant, or lovely, or cheerful in all that is spread before you?"

"Do you think I want common sense? or that I have lost the use of my eyes? my friend," said the gentleman somewhat angrily, "that I should not be able to relish the charms of such a scene as this?"

"Well then," said the Baron, "if you are able to judge of my son's good character by seeing his good works, which are poor and imperfect, how does it happen that you form no judgment of the goodness of God, by witnessing such wonders of his handy works as are now before you? Let me never hear you, my good friend, again say that you know not God, unless you would have me suppose that you have lost the use of your senses."

GENTLENESS.

Whoever understands his own interest, and is pleased with the beautiful, rather than the deformed, will be careful to cherish the virtue of gentleness. It requires but a slight knowledge of human nature to convince us that much of happiness in life must depend upon the cultivation of this virtue. The man of a wild, boisterous spirit, who gives loose reins to his temper, is generally speaking, a stranger to happiness; he lives in a continual storm; the bitter waters of contention and strife are always swelling up in the soul, destroying his peace, and imparting the baneful influence to all with whom he is connected. He excites the disgust and ill will of those who are acquainted with his character, and but few can be found to wish him success in any of his undertakings. Not so is the influence of gentleness. This virtue will assist its possessor in all his lawful undertakings; it will often render him successful when nothing else could; it is exceedingly lovely and attractive in its appearances; it wins the hearts of all; it is even stronger than argument, and will often prevail when that would be powerless and ineffectual; it shows that man can put a bridle upon his passions, that he is above the ignoble vulgar, whose characteristic is to storm and rage like the troubled ocean, at every little adversity or disappointment that crosses their path; it shows that he can soar away in the bright atmosphere of good feelings, and live in a continual sunshine, when all around him are enveloped in clouds and darkness, and driven about like maniacs, the sport of their own passions. The most favorable situations in life, the most lovely objects in nature, wealth, and all that is calculated to increase the happiness of man, lose their charm upon a heart destitute of this virtue.

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